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explanation in the Assyrian words *samu*, “olive-colored,” and *ippatu*, “the white race.” I am now more than ever persuaded that I was right in this suggestion. Will you allow me briefly to give my reasons for making it?

The meaning of the name of Ham has long been recognized. It is an amalgamation of the Hebrew שָׁמָר, “hot” (a root which is also met with in Assyrian), and the Egyptian *kem*, “black,” which was frequently used to denote the land of Egypt itself. Shem, according to the ordinary rule, would correspond with the Assyrian *samu*, the Assyrian *s* representing a Hebrew *שׁ* in proper names. Now, *samu* signifies much the same color as the Greek γλαυκός. Its nearest English equivalent would be “grey,” which is sometimes used of blue eyes, sometimes of a color that is almost brown. Similarly, while *samu* can be employed to denote a stone, which was probably the Sinaitic turquoise, it was also applied to a mist or cloud. Whether the bye-form *siamu* is the Hebrew שִׁמְעָן I will not decide. In any case Professor Delitzsch is certainly right in saying that *samu* is “probably grey, and perhaps brown.” It is, in fact, like γλαυκός, “olive-colored,” and would thus be appropriately applied to denote the color of the skin of the so-called Semitic population in Western Asia.

Japhet answers almost exactly to the Assyrian *ippatu*, the feminine of *ippu*, “white.” Now in the bilingual hymns and elsewhere the Sumerians of Southern Babylonia are called sometimes “black heads,” sometimes “black faces,” and this “black race” seems to be meant by the word *adamatu*, which is given as the Semitic equivalent of the Accadian *adama*. The latter word was expressed by two ideographs which literally denoted “black blood.” At all events *adamatu* would be a close parallel to *ippatu*, the feminine being employed, as is usual in Semitic languages, to represent an abstract noun.—*A. H. Sayce, in the Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology, June, '83.*

Use of Proof Texts.—Another sin against the Bible is often committed by the indiscriminate use of proof texts in dogmatic assertion and debate. They are hurled against one another in controversy with such difference of interpretation that it has become a proverb that anything can be proved from the Bible. The Bible has been too often used as if it were a text-book of abstract definitions giving absolute truth. On the contrary, the Bible was not made for ecclesiastical lawyers, but for the people of God. It gives the concrete in the forms and methods of general literature. Its statements are ordinarily relative; they depend upon the context in which they are imbedded, the scope of the author's argument, his peculiar point of view, his type of thought, his literary style, his position in the unfolding of divine revelation. There are occasional passages so pregnant with meaning that they seem to present, as it were, the quintessence of the whole Bible. Such texts were called by Luther little bibles. But ordinarily, the texts can be properly understood only in their context. To detach them from their place and use them as if they stood alone, and deduce from them all that the words and sentences may be constrained to give, as absolute statements, is an abuse of logic and the Bible. Such a use of other books would be open to the charge of misrepresentation. Such a use of the Bible is an adding unto the Word of God new meanings and taking away from it the true meaning. Against this we are warned by the Bible itself (Rev. xxii., 18-19). Deduction, inference, and application may be used within due bounds, but they must always be based upon a correct apprehension of the text and context of the passage. These processes should

be conducted with great caution, lest in transferring the thought to new conditions and circumstances, there be an insensible assimilation first of its form and then of its contents to these conditions and circumstances, and it become so transformed as to lose its biblical character and become a tradition of man.* It is a melancholy feature of biblical study that so much attention must be given to the removal of the rubbish of tradition that has been heaped upon the Word of God now as in the times of Jesus. The Bible is like an oasis in a desert. Eternal vigilance and unceasing activity are necessary to prevent the sands from encroaching upon it and overwhelming its fertile soil and springs of water.—*From Briggs' Biblical Study.*

The Position of Palestine.—In a former article it has been shown that Palestine was admirably fitted to secure the isolation of the Jews while the great preparatory process for the Bible was going on. Let another fact equally as important and extraordinary be noted. By its position Palestine, at the time of the communication of the Scriptures, was the hinge of the three continents, Asia, Africa, and Europe; the focal point of the world's great centres of influence. In its immediate vicinity lay both the most densely populated countries and the most powerful states of antiquity. On the South was Egypt; on the North and East Assyria, Babylon, and Persia. Still closer were Tyre and Sidon, whose vessels touched at every harbor then known to navigation, and whose colonies were planted in each of the three continents of the old world.† The great routes of inland commerce between these and other nations lay either through a portion of its territory or within a short distance of its borders.

“Protected by their natural barriers the Jews for five hundred years remained undisturbed by the great nations by which they were finally overpowered, sufficiently long for their national life and ideas, in their essential peculiarities, to become settled and unchangeably fixed. And yet Palestine was so situated as to bring the Jews under a constant cosmopolitan influence.”‡ When the time came for the great nations East and West to move back and forth, and for ships from afar to plow the sea, Palestine necessarily came into contact with race after race. It was on the dividing line between the oriental and the occidental world; and the Jews accordingly were brought face to face with men of almost every nationality. By its position, Palestine became a sort of elevated platform upon which the being and unity of God were exhibited to all the world;§ and upon which Israel became the focal point for all the world's modifying and molding influences. The situation of Palestine secured for centuries, on the one hand, the seclusion of the Jews until their religious convictions and principles were settled, till the dialect of the kingdom of heaven was formed and fixed, till they were trained for their sublime mission to humanity—and it was so situated, on the other hand, as to bring its people under the widest and most diversified influences, when God's time had arrived. The Jew, by virtue of his religion and his location, became at once the most exclusive and the most cosmopolitan of men—a character which he retains to this day. And the Book which has been given to the world through the Jew is precisely of this nature—the most intensely exclusive, the most amazingly universal. That Palestine entered as no unimportant factor into the accomplishment

* *Westm. Confession of Faith*, I., 6.

† Geikie. ‡ G. M. Peters. § Fairbairn's “Typology.”